GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:877
ANSWERED ON:07.02.2017
Definition of Forest
Subbareddy Shri Yerram Venkata

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is true that Government has given a new definition for "forest" and if so, details thereof;
(b) the details regarding the two broad categories of forests that the Ministry has submitted to the Supreme Court;
(c) whether the Government is allocating forest land for various activities without having a proper definition of what constitutes forest;
(d) whether it is true that the Government is deforesting some forest land for amaravati city in Andhra Pradesh; and
(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

(a) to (c): No, Sir. The Ministry is following the definition of forest as per the Hon'ble Supreme Court's Order dated 12.12.1996 in the matter of T. N. Godavarman Thirumulkpad Vs Union of India and Others in W.P. (Civil) No.202 of 1995 with W.P (Civil) No.171/96

The world "forest" must be understood according to its dictionary meaning. This description cover all statutorily recognised forests, whether designated as reserved, protected or otherwise for the purpose of Section 2 (i) of the Forest Conservation Act. The term "forest land", occurring in Section 2, will not only include "forest" as understood in the dictionary sense, but also any area recorded as forest in the Government record irrespective of the ownership. This is how it has to be understood for the purpose of Section 2 of the Act. The provisions enacted in the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 for the Conservation of forests and the matters connected therewith must apply clearly to all forests so understood irrespective of the ownership of classification thereof".

This definition is used for all purposes including the proposals received under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

(d) and (e): No, Sir.
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